



Bavarian News

Vol. 7, Nr. 9 U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt and Garmisch May 11, 2011



Sgt. Jacob Brewster, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart (top), and Staff Sgt. William Speers, U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza, struggle for position during a level one combatives exercise, May 2.

Soldiers battle for coveted title

Story and photos by
Molly Hayden
Staff Writer

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The competition was fierce among the 11 Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from garrisons throughout Installation Management Command-Europe as each vied for the titles of IMCOM-E 2011 Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year.

The three-day battle tested each participant physically and mentally with grueling athletic

events and intellectually stimulating written and verbal exams.

The competition commenced May 2 with an Army Physical Fitness Test, followed by marksmanship evaluation at the firing range and weapons maintenance. The day ended in hand-to-hand combat as Soldiers and NCOs tested their physical stamina tested during the brutal combatives tournament.

“Combatives were challenging,” said Spc. Cara Bennett, who See SOY/NCOY, page 17



Staff Sgt. Niger Jones, USAG Bamberg, trudges along the path, gear in hand, during the 12-mile foot march in the Grafenwoehr Training Area.

Women to pave new path in war

By Charles Stadlander
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — Though the issue of women taking frontline combat roles is currently being volleyed back and forth in Washington, D.C.’s political discourse, the Army has recently begun assembling small teams of female Soldiers for a new strategy not yet attempted during the war in Afghanistan. Schweinfurt Soldiers gearing up for deployment later this year are leading the way with this new initiative.

When they go to Afghanistan later this year, the 172nd Infantry Brigade will bring

an organized squad of several female engagement teams to augment the utility of the brigade’s infantry task forces, an action among the first of its kind on this scale in the U.S. Army. The brigade’s Schweinfurt-based elements — 172nd Support Battalion, 9th Engineer Battalion and 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment — will provide most of the female personnel for the teams.

They will be led by FET officer-in-charge 1st Lt. Jennifer Montgomery, who recently transferred from Schweinfurt’s 12th Chemical Co. to the brigade staff, and still resides See WOMEN, page 17

Grafenwoehr’s DPW continues to shine

By U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr
Public Affairs
News Release

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The Department of Defense has selected the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr’s Environmental Division as its top candidate for environmental quality in the overseas installation category for the 2011 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards.

“Our strength lies in our partnership within the garrison and outside the garrison with the German Forestry Service and the county of Neustadt-Waldnaab,” said Manfred Rieck, chief of the Environ-

mental Division. “This enables us to support the military mission while remaining in compliance with environmental laws.”

Rieck also received an award for his supervision of the division at the Installation Management Command Symposium, April 18-21. The division will be recognized at an awards ceremony at the Pentagon, June 8.

For more information on 2011 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards, visit www.denix.osd.mil/awards/FY10SECDEF.cfm.

Editor’s Note: The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs contributed reporting.

INSIDE JMTC bids farewell to ZaGara, welcomes Zavodsky

Sister Act 2
After nearly four years apart, two Soldier sisters reunite briefly during deployment.
See page 6

Soldier Show
Step right up and enjoy a free, 90-minute song-and-dance extravaganza for Soldiers, by Soldiers. The event will hit Graf’s Main Post Theater May 16.
See page 8

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Story and photo by
Spc. Lauren DeVita
JMTC Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — After four years as the senior listed advisor to the commanding general of Joint Multinational Training Command, Command Sgt. Maj. Darieus A. ZaGara transitioned his authority in a change of responsibility ceremony here, April 14.

As part of the ceremony, ZaGara was also honored for his 31 years of military service as he, joined by his wife Belinda, marked his retirement from the U.S. Army.

“It has always been said that the NCO Corps is the backbone of the Army,” said Brig. Gen. Steven L. Salazar, commander of the Joint Multinational Training Command. “However, these words do not convey the depth and breadth of the support Command Sgt. Maj. ZaGara provided to this command, U.S. Army Europe and our multinational partners.”

According to Salazar, through his work with the 7th Army NCO Acad-



Gen. Carter F. Ham, commander of U.S. Africa Command (left), welcomes JMTC’s Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis C. Zavodsky following a change of responsibility ceremony, April 14. Zavodsky replaced Command Sgt. Maj. Darieus ZaGara.

emy, the oldest and largest noncommissioned officer academy in the United States Army, ZaGara sought to provide units the best-trained instructors and resources to build future leaders. In 2009, former NCOA instructor Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Beckman was selected as the Department of the Army NCO of the Year.

As the only place in the U.S. Army that regularly trains with multinational partners, JMTC supports U.S. European Command’s theater security cooperation initiatives.

“This command is the most diverse

and multifaceted organization I have ever had the pleasure of serving in,” ZaGara said.

ZaGara worked with the NCO corps of multinational partners, helping nations like Poland develop NCO academies specific to the needs of their country, Salazar said.

“In no small measure, he is the reason we can say there is no better place to train for Afghanistan,” Salazar said.

Although, this was good bye for ZaGara, he managed to make light of his retirement while delivering his remarks

to the command and guests in attendance.

“Many noncommissioned officers, officers and warrant officers have influenced me to desire serving for over 30 years,” ZaGara said. “But the driving force for who I am, and my love for the Army, is in the Soldiers and their supporting cast — the families for whom Belinda and I have served for so long.”

Stationed in Fort Sill, Fort Bliss, Fort Stewart, with multiple assignments in Germany, he held positions ranging from section chief, instructor, to command sergeant major at the battalion and brigade level. He also served two tours in Bosnia, and two tours in Iraq.

“He is what I like to call a battle-worn warrior,” Salazar said. “However, as he moves on to bigger and better things, he will take with him the lessons learned as a military professional, secure in the knowledge of a job well-done.”

Coming from Fort Richardson, Alaska, Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis C. Zavodsky took over the position as the JMTC’s command sergeant major.



Bavarian News

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Water Tower art by Dane Gray

Commander's Message



Accolades abound for Grafenwoehr

When I heard I was going to Heidelberg for the Topper Awards ceremony, my first thought was: "What is a Topper Award?" I asked people around the garrison and most of them did not know what a Topper was either. At the Tournament of Plays Topper Awards ceremony, April 30, which celebrated achievements in 21 participating shows, our own Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center walked away with six awards, including the highest of the night, the award for Best Musical, which they performed "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee."

Grafenwoehr won best ensemble for that musical as well. Moreover, Grafenwoehr won for the best technical director for a musical, Staff Sgt. Bernie Escarcega for "Spelling Bee;" best debut performance in a musical, Sgt. Elliot Valdez, "Spelling Bee;" best supporting actor for a comedy, Steve Thornbrugh in "Lend Me a Tenor;" and best supporting actress for a comedy, Rebecca Connolly also in "Lend Me A Tenor."

Founded in 2008, the Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center is the youngest of the performing arts centers in Europe. The center provides opportu-

nities for USAG Grafenwoehr's community members to learn and develop their talents and is always looking for new talent and support. Congratulations to everyone affiliated with the Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center and to all the individual winners of this year's Topper Awards.



IMCOM awards

Last month, the Installation Management Command hosted a symposium in San Antonio to discuss priorities in these tough economic times and recognize its stellar performers that contribute to the Army's success. Our garrison received several awards including having the best mentor-mentee program, 2010 IMCOM Soldier of the Year (Spc. Luis Berber), and the Supervisory Management Award (DPW's Manfred Rieck).

In addition, Grafenwoehr was one

of six garrisons chosen as a Net Zero Waste pilot installation and our Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program was recognized for its Single Soldiers' Summit.

For more on the IMCOM Symposium in San Antonio, see page 17.

Upcoming events

One way the Army takes care of its own is through the Army Emergency Relief campaign. Last year we raised \$94,000 and distributed more than \$1 million to Soldiers and family members. Don't miss your chance to pay it forward and make a difference. The current AER campaign runs through, May 15. For more information, visit www.aerhq.org.

My mother is Korean and I'm very proud of my Asian heritage. However, you don't have to be Asian or Pacific Islander to appreciate this rich culture. Come out and join me and the students of Netzaberg Middle School, May 23, at 1:30 p.m., as we celebrate the contributions of Asian-Pacific Americans.

In an effort to reduce traffic and increase efficiency, the garrison will open the tank trail road between Gate

4 in Tanzfleck and Rose Barracks' Gate 2 for both military and POV use. The ribbon-cutting ceremony is currently scheduled for May 25. Stay tuned to the Bavarian News and AFN for more details about the event.

Local flavor

Although the Bavarian weather has vacillated a bit lately, spring has finally arrived, so don't miss your chance to get out into the community and enjoy some of the local culture. Packed with carnival rides and great food, the fruehlingsfests (spring festivals) are currently winding down in many cities, but check out Munich's fest (through May 15, daily from 11 a.m.-11 p.m.) and the spring volksfest (Maidult) in Regensburg, May 13-29, every day from 1-11 p.m.

Once again, thank you for all you do to make Grafenwoehr a great place to live and work!

*Col. Vann Smiley
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Resilience just one part of Soldier 360°

The first in a seven-part series on Soldiers becoming healthier, more balanced and resilient

Story and photo by
Denver Makle
*Joint Multinational
Training Command*

According to dictionary.com, resilience means two things: the ability to return to the original position after being bent or stretched; or the ability to recover readily from illness, depression and adversity. During the Soldier 360° Leader Comprehensive Fitness Course, a two-week course for noncommissioned officers, leaders are introduced to programs available throughout the Grafenwoehr Military Community, while learning to provide support to their squad members and peers, who might be struggling with stress, relationship challenges, anger, physical fitness or other challenges.

Fresh insight

The course curriculum incorporates a series of seminars, presentations and activities delivered by instructors and volunteers from within the community. Sessions are taught by professionals and health care providers. NCOs got new insight into practices and opportunities that might not have been available to Soldiers before, such as sleep and pain management using acupuncture, relaxation and physical fitness techniques, and Tai Chi and yoga, ancient art-forms that reinforce the Army's typical physical fitness training. Also, meditation, hypnosis and art therapy were used for stress reduction, mental focus, balance and psychological fitness.

I had the pleasure of participating in this amazing reinforcement of human resilience. It was a life-changing experience. I witnessed 44 leaders from within my community, who openly talked about the effects of frequent deployments on themselves, peers and families. After the first four days of the course and basic instruction on the signs and symptoms of stress and training in anger management, participants could describe the triggers for un-



Staff Sgt. Ramon A. Ortiz of Company C of the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, in Hohenfels, Germany, and his wife Zenaida execute a yoga position as part of couples yoga during a recent Soldier 360° course. Spouses may participate in the second week of the course to learn skills that help them to communicate better.

healthy behaviors in themselves and their peers and could address potential tools to reduce its effects.

Candid discussions

I'm not saying it was amazing that they could understand the material. It was amazing because these NCOs were obviously challenged by their responsibilities. They are leading groups of Soldiers who are facing similar challenges and stresses at home. The discussions were candid, some talked about the difficulties of making connections at home with their families and battling their own demons — challenges that can lead to personal destruction and Army mission failure. Others talked about unhealthy worry over potential mission failure that has led to lack of proper rest, anxious behaviors that affected the unit and caused depression and fear. What is amazing is that these Soldiers aren't much different than most other NCOs at other installations. However, these Soldiers showed a great deal of dignity and courage and spoke up, honestly and candidly unafraid to try something new. The tools offered weren't new, although the NCOs might not have known about them before. While participat-

ing in yoga they realized it was hard work, not just fluffy, hippie-speak stretching. They gradually applied themselves in creative ways and never complained.

Refining tools

Also, this amazing course developed Army leaders using "existing" tools and resources, things that are already funded — not programs that need to be created. This type of program could be offered at any installation using the synergy of the entire community, and reaping benefits because all Soldiers have the courage to try new things and the determination to become better leaders, Soldiers and spouses.

These 44 demonstrated they haven't given-up on the ideals that made them great Soldiers in the first place. The Army values of duty, respect, selfless service, integrity and personal courage drive them to continue to fight often overwhelming challenges to become better husbands, fathers, mentors and warriors, while doing everything the Army asks, including multiple deployments to support the objective of winning the war.

These Soldiers demonstrated they are willing to fight harder to maintain a healthy balance between self

and Soldier-leader, and self and husband-spouse. They struggle to manage their time, talent and the difficult mission the Army has given them in Afghanistan. They are key to developing our junior enlisted, entrusted with America's younger and less-experienced Soldiers, affecting the next generation of Army leaders.

Above and beyond

Finally, this was amazing because I'm sure the unit's G3 or S3 training NCO received a tasking for so many personnel to attend the course and selected NCOs who were available. The NCOs showed up not knowing what to expect, and with some selected at the last moment; however, they were engaged, participative, assertive and powerful. They were nominated by their commanders to participate, but the information shared and level of interaction could not be ordered. It was genuine, real and raw in most cases.

In fact, one Soldier said, "Nothing is constant except change." And that physics law, mixed with the courage and determination of these Soldiers demonstrated that the Soldier 360° alumni will become the change agents of tomorrow's Army, powerful leaders within the community and more successful at home with their families and after the military.

I learned Soldiers, civilians and family members are all struggling with mission-fatigue. The challenges were well-verbalized in the faces of the individuals I met during Soldier 360°. However, the resiliency of the person was demonstrated over and over again. Each morning the NCOs were excited to defeat that yoga position that had challenged them the day before, or had the courage to get up before the others and lead the group in a relaxation exercise. It was one of the most memorable experiences I've ever had. It was a week of self-doubt, self-discovery, self-love, acceptance and empowerment.

Group seeks to grow new leaders

By Lt. Col. Kate Crusan
USAREUR Diversity Initiatives

A community-level Diversity Working Group is coming soon to a community near you. The working group will be led by the local senior mission commander and co-chaired by an Installation Management Command — Europe representative. Participants will be members of the local communities and you may be asked to participate.

Corporate America has been cultivating the diversity concept for the last 10 years. The service components have been talking about diversity for about the last five years. Now it is time to get serious.

If the Army is going to compete for America's finest talent, we need to embrace diversity. It is simply a matter of survival for our all volunteer force — and we need you to get involved.

U.S. Army in Europe leadership has held several executive level steering committees to provide guidance and strategic focus throughout the European footprint. Now it is time to engage at the tactical level. The community-level working groups will receive discussion topics formulated by the executive steering committee. The working groups will discuss these topics, generate ideas for how to handle them, and the minutes will be recorded. The ideas of the working group will be fed back to the commanding general and his executive steering committee. Your voice will be heard.

The long-term focus is to grow more senior leaders, both civilian and military, who accurately reflect our Army demographics.

Here in the U.S. Army in Europe, our focus must be on the inclusionary. Our main premise is to promote diversity within the command — and highlight the uniqueness of our workforce and how Diversity helps us to better accomplish our mission. Mixing military, U.S. civilians, local national civilians, and family members in a foreign environment and doing it well has always been a hallmark of excellence of serving with the U.S. Army in Europe.

If interested in participating in your community's diversity working group, contact Lt. Col. Kate Crusan at DSN 370-8383, CIV 06221-57-8383 or Ms. Erni Moya at 379-6524, CIV 0620-280-6524.

Kids gain culinary confidence

Story and photos by
Molly Hayden
Staff Writer

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Attention parents: don't be surprised if you come home one night and find a three-course meal sitting on your dining room table. With culinary classes offered by School of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration and Skills (SKIES) Unlimited, the secret chef could be a pint-sized one. Leilani Turner, 8, looked at home in the brightly lit kitchen of the Netzaberg School-Age Center, recently. Bits of cupcake batter painted her reindeer-clad apron and her long brown hair was speckled with flour.

"I'm cooking all by myself and I've never done that before," said Turner as she poured the batter into a baking pan while following the recipe for the "Taste the Rainbow" cupcakes. "It can be hard sometimes because I'm making things I never have before."

"But it always tastes yummy," she added with a giggle.

Culinary arts classes for children are a way to encourage aspiring chefs and boost their motivation level, according to Culinary Arts Instructor Marie Crites, Child, Youth and School Services.

"We teach them basic skills like how to use a knife and which pan to use for what recipe, but more importantly we want to get the kids excited about cooking and excited about food," said Crites. "They feel more comfortable in the kitchen and have a desire to experiment more with various recipes."

Additionally, children and young adults who attend cu-



Abby Taylor, 11, applies icing, the finishing touch, to her homemade cupcakes. Taylor, along with five other bantam bakers prepared the sweet snacks during a culinary arts class at the Netzaberg School-Age Center, recently.

linary arts classes boost their academic knowledge in science, language and math.

"You have to follow the recipe and measure everything precisely," said 10-year-old Gabriel Robson. "It's an exact science."

Cooking may be an exact science, but there is always room for a little creativity, according to 8-year-old Jacob Brown.

"I made this cupcake Army green," he said, showing off his food coloring skills.

As freshly baked cupcakes exited the oven, the already excited kids indulged on the sugary snack, garnering oohs, aahs and mmms.

"I'm a good cook," said Turner. "I'll definitely be a cook when I grow up."



Leilani Turner, 8, shows off her freshly baked cupcakes during a culinary arts class offered by SKIES Unlimited. The classes are designed to teach basic kitchen skills and encourage cooking creativity among aspiring chefs.

SKIES Culinary Arts Classes

Culinary arts classes are held Tuesdays at the Netzaberg School-Age Center, 5:30–7:30 p.m., and Wednesdays at the Rose Barracks Youth Center, 5-7 p.m., for ages 7-11.

Young adults ages 12-18 can attend classes at the Netzaberg

Youth Center on Fridays, 5:15-7:15 p.m., and Thursdays at the Rose Barracks Youth Center, 5-7 p.m.

Enrollment in the program is \$70 for one month of classes. For more, contact the Rose Barracks Parent Central Services at DSN

476-2760, CIV 09662-83-2760 or Grafenwoehr Parent Central Services at 475-6656, CIV 09641-83-6656.

Additionally, sign-up is available on WebTrac at www.webtrac.mwr.army.mil/webtrac/Grafenwoehr/cyms.html.

Teens get a crash course in 'parenting'

Story and photo by
Charlotte Woods
Bamberg Middle High School

BAMBERG, Germany — Sure, little baby shoes and little baby clothes are cute, but often people forget about the not-so-little responsibility of having a cute little baby, or the pains of a big baby bump. Bamberg Middle High School students recently experienced a taste of the bittersweet reality of parenthood.

Seemingly pregnant students, both female and male, have been seen walking the halls and having difficulty squeezing into desks. Other students have been seen carrying baby dolls either strapped to them or in car seat carriers to their classes.

Many may wonder what epidemic has suddenly swept BMHS, when in reality the teen parents and parents-to-be aren't toting actual living children. These scenarios are simulations created by BMHS teacher Elaine Engel for her psychology class.

Having just wrapped up an analysis of personality disorders and a study of serial killers, developmental psychology is next in the curriculum. An idea that was born while joking around during a lecture led to the class project which is intended to help the students understand and relate to parents and their daily lives.

"As a teacher, I always try to be creative and come up with ideas for teaching methods and projects, but I like it when the students think up something on their own," Engel said. "This was student driven," she added.

Though the class is taking on this adventurous project, the students are only getting a small taste of pregnancy and parenthood for the length of each school day in the week. The simulated babies don't actually cry in the middle of the night. In fact, they don't cry at all.

The prosthetic baby bellies don't actually have living babies squirming around in

This experience can serve as a reality check for many students.

Dominick Calabria
Principal, Bamberg Middle High School

them. However, the project is as realistic as possible and offers enough experience for students to grasp the realities of teen pregnancies, understand those who are and have been pregnant, as well as heed caution in sexual activity and birth control.

"I like that this experience can serve as a reality check for many students," principal Dominick Calabria said.

He also described how parents that had been on the school campus commented on how many pregnant students there were at the school. That is, until they saw the pregnant boys, and realized that it must be a class project of some sort.

"As a father of three children, with another one on the way, I really support this project," said Tommy Schubert, a student teacher in the history department at BMHS. "There is a misconception that pregnancy is easy."

He added that he loves how the students are learning about and experiencing some of the hardships associated with becoming a parent.

Students had a choice to be a parent or an expecting parent for the week. Those who chose to be parents brought baby dolls from their homes to school.

Some students had their baby dolls strapped into Baby Bjorn carriers while others carried their kiddos in car seat/stroller combos as they cared for them throughout the school day.

"I think it would be more beneficial if we had the key-lock babies that some schools have in the states that actually cry. Then we would have a

See TEENS, page 17

Tots get a taste of Soldier's life at Children's Boot Camp

Story and photo by
Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Leaping over barriers, crawling under netting and marching in formation, over 170 children attended the Girl Scouts/1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment Boot Camp, a half-day event aimed at giving young ones a taste of the Soldiers' life.

Tammy Koepke, junior and cadet Girl Scout leader, said the idea came to her after a conversation between her husband Sgt. Aron Koepke and their 10-year-old daughter Megan.

"She asked him what college he went to in order to become a Soldier," Koepke said. "He said 'I didn't, I went to Basic Training.' I thought how many other kids probably ask their parents the same thing, so why not show the kids kind of what their mom and dad went through to get where they are today."

Koepke said the Girls Scouts had been brainstorming ideas for some new events to sponsor within the community.

"We live on a very small base, and the things that go on here are sometimes limited, and we were just trying to step out of the box a little and bring something new to the community," she said.

Girls Scout event coordinator and co-junior leader Karissa Borders said



From left: Matteo Steller and Hayden McCullough team up to flip a tire across the obstacle course at the Children's Boot Camp event sponsored by the Girl Scouts, April 30.

they also wanted to make military life seem a more enjoyable to the children.

"Sometimes with the deployments and the other stressful things that go on with kids, if they can just have fun with something that mom and dad 'do,' it would be really a positive thing for the whole community," said Borders.

Under the guidance of Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, children formed into

companies, ran through an obstacle course, participated in PT, and learned the basics of parade marching.

"The response from the Soldiers wanting to volunteer is just amazing," Koepke said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Tony Winters, 1-4th Inf. Regt., and 15 other Soldiers volunteered to serve as "drill sergeants" for the event.

"It's an honor to me," said Winters. "I enjoy working with kids and the idea of bringing the kids out and

doing a boot camp and letting them see what we do as Soldiers I thought was an awesome opportunity."

Winters said when he mentioned the project to his Soldiers, the response was overwhelming.

"They just started throwing up their hands saying 'sergeant major, I want to help,'" he said.

The event included children in grades kindergarten through middle school. Several girls from the German Girl Guides, the German equivalent to the Girl Scouts, also attended.

"It's a great event," said Mini De Lamarter-Lefebvre, whose daughter participated in the days activities. "Kids want to do what their parents do; they put mommy's heels on, they watch daddy go out in the field, so they want to emulate their parents. What a great opportunity for mom and dad to spend time with their children and get the community involved."

Borders said she's hoping the event draws some attention to what the Girl Scouts bring to the community.

"We'd like to be known for more than just our cookies," she laughed.

The Girl Scouts creed involves caring, responsibility and courage, and Borders believes in helping foster these characteristics in children.

"I do this for the girls so that they can have a positive group to be around, and so they can learn to make

good choices and be a positive influence on their community and their environment," she said. "Girl Scouts is about building them up as individuals and possible leaders in the future, making them confident in what they can do."

Sgt. Enrique Medina, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-4th Inf. Regt., enjoyed watching his son Aurelio go through the drill ceremony and the obstacle course.

"He's learning to stay with a team and work together," Medina said.

Zerina Coley, whose husband Staff Sgt. Donny Coley recently deployed to Afghanistan with the 527th Military Police Company, had three children running the laps and flipping tires.

"I wanted them to gain an appreciation for what their dad does all the time," she said. "Now that he's down-range and he has to do this around the clock — they only get a little time to do it — but they'll have an idea."

As the day ended, the children formed up as a platoon and presented themselves for inspection to Lt. Col. Rafael A. Paredes, 1-4th Inf. Regt. commander.

Ten-year old Zach Wooden summed up his experience at boot camp with a sentiment that is undoubtedly echoed by many in the armed forces.

"It's a little tough being a Soldier," he said. "But it's worth it."

Building a greener Grafenwoehr



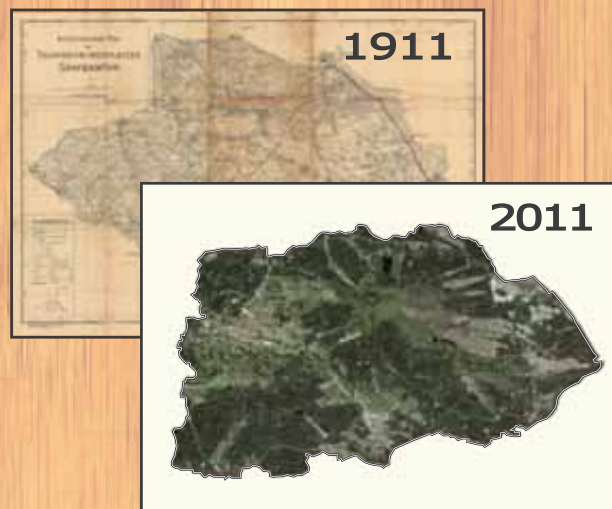
Grafenwoehr Training Area environmental stewardship exhibit opens 7 June at the Historical and Cultural Museum

By Christian Marquardt
JMTC Public Affairs

For over 65 years, the U.S. Army and the German government have worked together to ensure that the military training lands in Bavaria are sustainable for both the natural environment and military training.

The Grafenwoehr Training Area is an example of the success of that partnership. The cooperation of the Joint Multinational Training Command's Integrated Training Area Management program, the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr's Environmental Division and the German Federal Forestry Office in the management and conservation of Grafenwoehr's natural and training resources has resulted in a unique area in which both nature and military training thrive.

In celebration of the city of Grafenwoehr's 650th anniversary, that unique environmental partnership will be on display this summer at the Grafenwoehr Historical and Cultural Museum in a special exhibit called "Nature's Defense: German-American Environmental Stewardship of the Grafenwoehr Training Area." The exhibit uses historical maps, aerial images and photos to explain the history of land use within the training area and how the practice of environmental stewardship evolved to make Grafenwoehr not only the most realistic and relevant live-fire training area in the U.S. Army, but also a sanctuary for some of Bavaria's most threatened and endangered plant and animal life. It will also focus on some of the modern techniques the Army is using to map and manage training lands in Europe and around the world.



The Grafenwoehr Historical Museum is located next to the city park and is open Tuesday-Thursday and Sundays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The museum has a special wing devoted to the 100 year military history of the Grafenwoehr Training Area



For more information on ITAM programs and events, publications and environmental policies visit their website at

<https://srp.usareur.army.mil>

Kids get their day in the sun

Story and photo by
Nathan Van Schaik
*USAG Schweinfurt
Public Affairs*

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — The month dedicated to our little unsung heroes ended with a bang as the garrison's Child, Youth and School Services — partnering up with nearly 30 on- and off-post facilities, agencies and tenant units — played host to this year's hallmark event honoring Schweinfurt's military children Saturday, April 30 on Askren Manor.

Undeterred by intermittent showers, hundreds flocked to the annual kids' extravaganza known as Kinderfest.

Children and families paraded the Askren grounds to kick-off the event. Representatives from the garrison, youth center, fire department, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, schools, the German army and various tenant units marched in solidarity as community members, perched from their balconies, cheered the procession.

"All year long we give praise, deservedly so, to the men and women in our military," said CYSS coordinator



Young Hunter Barnes has his face painted at this year's Kinderfest held April 30 at Askren Manor.

Michael Payne in opening remarks to anxious kids and parents. "But sometimes we forget to recognize the challenges military children face during every deployment and the sacrifices they make. So today is for them!"

Schweinfurt's CYSS hosted the event to honor military children and the sacrifices they make. Event organizers galvanized support from both on and off post and pulled together resources to entertain children and adults of all ages.

"I think the hardest thing

for our military kids is the constant change from deployments, to working late to moving," said Laquan Martin whose son, Javon, goes to the elementary school. Javon's dad is with the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and currently deployed to Afghanistan.

Asked what the best part of the fest was, little Javon reiterated what most kids were saying: "Everything!"

Along the School Age Center and adjacent to the elementary school, pony rides, climbing walls, German

army demonstrations, live entertainment and inflatable trampolines were just several of the activities offered to the community at no cost from a list that included both indoor and outdoor attractions. The auto skills center even had an airbag demonstration.

Indoors, various garrison facilities set up information booths, food tables, static displays and a wide-range of activities geared toward children and their parents. The library, bowling center and Army Community Service all had something to offer.

In all, the event served as a staging ground for a multitude of garrison facilities to coalesce and give back to military youth.

Today, there are 1.8 million American children and youth under 18 years old with a parent serving in the military.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Month of the Military Child. Former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger designated April as the Month of the Military Child in 1986 underscoring the important role children play in the armed forces community.



Photo by Shanda Lonkhurst

Not fiddling around

GARMISCH-PARTEN-KIRCHEN — Garmisch has talent! Seventh-grader Kelsey Van Der Lay performs on violin before an audience and judges for the Garmisch Elementary-Middle School talent show. Students in grades 1-8 demonstrated their talents ranging from singing and dancing to playing musical instruments. The winners were announced at an assembly at the end of April.

Summer Hire 2011

By U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs
News Release

HEIDELBERG, Germany — The Civilian Human Resources Agency Europe Region will accept applications through May 22 for summer employment across Europe for military family members ages 14-22.

The 2011 Summer Hire program, which runs from June 21 through July 31, provides jobs in clerical, labor and child development positions. Online applications are available at the CHRA-E website, <https://cpolrhp.cpol.army.mil/eur/>, under "employment." Applicants must also submit hard copies of employment documents directly to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center that services their community.

Applicants for summer hire positions must be unmarried Family members of active duty service members or DOD civilian employees. The applicant must have reached their 14th birthday prior to June 21 and must not reach their 23rd birthday prior to the end of the program July 31.

End of an era: Last Hueys in Europe retire

Story and photo by
Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Rotors ripping the air, four UH-1 Iroquois helicopters soared above Hohenfels for the last time at a retirement ceremony for the aircraft, April 27.

A total of 10 "Hueys" have served at Hohenfels over the past 40 years, most recently as training aids for the Joint Multinational Readiness Center.

"This is the last of the Hueys in service in U.S. Army Europe," said Col. John M. Spitzer, JMRC commander.

The original designation for the aircraft was HU-1 which led pilots to nickname it "Huey." Though the designation was later changed to UH-1, the term Huey stuck.

Medal of Honor recipient retired Col. Bruce Crandall attended the ceremony as the guest of honor. Crandall, whose story was dramatized in the Mel Gibson film "We were Soldiers," led the first major division operation of airmobile troops into Landing Zone X-ray in Vietnam's Ia Drang Valley on Nov. 14, 1965.

Under extreme enemy fire, Crandall completed 22 flights in his unarmed Huey, evacuating some 70 wounded Soldiers and providing ammunition to the troops on the ground.

"I fell in love with the Huey the moment I got in," Crandall said. "I bet most guys who flew it felt like that."

Crandall praised not only the Huey's versatility, but also its toughness.

"It would take a hell of a beating and



A UH-1 Huey lifts off on its last flight in U.S. Army Europe service, April 27.

keep flying," he said. "On November 14, half the ships were shot up. I changed helicopters and the next lift got shot up some more, and I went back to the first one. All you needed was enough duct tape to cover the holes."

The Army began phasing out the Hueys in the '80s with the introduction of the UH-60 Blackhawks. With the introduction of the smaller, quieter, and more maneuverable UH-72A Lakotas, the retirement of the Army's fleet of Hueys has accelerated. The Lakota is also replacing the UH-1 at the JMRC.

Several guests took part in some final flights throughout the day, including Mayor Peter Braun of Schmidmuehlen.

"I was born near Hohenfels in Schmidmuehlen, and the whole time as a child till now I hear the helicopters," Braun said. "Now, the helicopters go, and it is a bit sad. I am going to miss them."

Hohenfels Middle/High School science teacher Randall Roberts also en-

joyed one of the last flights. Roberts flew Hueys for 15 years during his military career.

"It's an emotional moment for me," Roberts said. "I loved the Huey. It's so friendly to fly. You could do every emergency procedure in the world and still recover in the Huey. I never thought I'd be in one again. It's an extreme honor, but it's a melancholy honor."

The four helicopters flew to Ramstein Air Force Base after the ceremony where they will be airlifted to Florida, then rebuilt into dual-engine Huey 2S, and returned to service with the Department of State Air Wing.

"As we bid farewell to the UH-1 today, we'll hold on to the legacy of the pilots and crew chiefs who flew her and kept her in the air," said Lt. Col. Brian Dillon, Joint Multinational Readiness Center senior aviation observer controller.

"It took men like Col. Crandall to turn the UH-1 into an iconic aircraft. The UH-1 became a legendary aircraft because it was flown by legends," he added.

Crandall said he has attended several retirement ceremonies for the Huey, even going up in the final flight at Yakima Training Center in Washington last February.

Many Hueys are still in use today, in foreign military as well as civilian service. The 78-year-old Crandall predicted the Huey will be in use somewhere for another 50 years.

"If I get to fly the last Huey, I'll be 110 years old," he joked.

War Eagles are flying home

Story and photo by
Maj. Robert Hoover
2SCR Public Affairs

DAND, Afghanistan — The War Eagles of 1st Squadron became the first unit in 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment to conduct the relief in place and transfer of authority with 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, at Forward Operating Base Tarnak, May 2.

Brig. Gen. Dean Milner, commander of Task Force Kandahar, was the guest speaker at the ceremony to recognize the change in one of Kandahar's southern districts. Canadian forces will end their presence in Kandahar by the end of July and transition to a training role in Kabul.

"There has been a lot of evolution in Dand. It has moved from Canadians (and) it has moved to Lt. Col. Paganini and (1st Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division). It's moved for the last couple of months to 1/2, the War Eagles, and now we are starting a new chapter with the 1st of the 5th. It was a lot of change for this little district," said Milner.

During the transfer of authority ceremony Milner mentioned the performance of the War Eagles.

"I have been totally impressed (with the War Eagles) because it has been all about the Afghans. It's all about you all, about assisting, cooperating and making this district the best that we can. Lt. Col. Sims, you and your team understood the counterinsurgency fight working with the Afghans, the (Afghan National Police) and



Lt. Col. Douglas Sims, commander of 1st Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, cases the squadron colors during a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Forward Operating Base Tarnak in southern Afghanistan.

governance; understanding the significance of development," Milner continued.

Sims, the War Eagles commander, expressed his appreciation to his troopers and summed up the overall mission in Afghanistan.

"Over the past year, the War Eagles have accomplished every mission they were given. They increased the proficiency of the ANP in Shah Wali Kot district, ensured that traffic was unimpeded from Kandahar City to Tarin Kot, and relieved one country's commitment to Afghanistan, the Netherlands, and worked with two other major contributors, the Australians and Canadians. As a commander, I could not be more proud of the organization, its accomplishments and the flexibility over the past year," said Sims.

"The accomplishments over the past year have not gone without costs. Spc. Jus-

tin Shoecraft, Pfc. Cody Board and Staff Sgt. Eric Nettleton each made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation and their brothers and sisters in arms. As we leave Afghanistan, we carry that in our hearts, not just in Vilseck, but in our hearts for the rest of our lives," continued Sims.

Sims also thanked his Afghan partners and friends in Dand and expressed confidence in the new team assumes responsibility.

"Dand district and eastern Panjwa'i are in exceptional hands. In the past several weeks, we have learned the Bobcats of 1-5 Infantry are well led and well trained, and have the exact right attitude and direction to join the team here in southern Afghanistan. I wish Lt. Col. Payne and Command Sgt. Maj. Bowen and all the Bobcats the best of luck as they continue the mission here."

Final 44th Company departs Schweinfurt for Afghanistan

Story and photo by
Charles Stadtlander
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — The Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion departed the garrison here in two buses the morning of May 2. The streets were lined with the remaining rear detachment troops of the 44th as well as family and friends of the Soldiers headed away for a year's service in Afghanistan.

Family members and friends of the HHC Soldiers gathered in USAG Schweinfurt's Warrior Zone at 6 a.m. for an early-morning hour of companionship and farewell before the troops left the garrison under clear blue skies and a sun that was just peeking over the horizon.

The assembled family and friends waved goodbye and the rear detachment Soldiers saluted as the buses rumbled away, headed for the plane that will transport the Soldiers eastward.



Soldiers from the rear detachment of the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion salute the buses carrying the battalion's Headquarters and Headquarters Company Soldiers as they depart Schweinfurt. The company will join the recently deployed A and C companies for one year in the north of Afghanistan.

The battalion's mission will be to manage the tactical network for Afghanistan's Regional Command-North, part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force. The HHC will travel there to join A and C companies, who left Schweinfurt last month. B Co.

of the 44th returned from its own yearlong deployment to Afghanistan between the departures of C Co. and HHC.

The arrival of these Soldiers in Afghanistan will complete the transport of 44th ESB personnel from Schweinfurt during this deployment of troops.

NCOs exhibit ideals of Sgt. Morales

Story and photo by
Sgt. First Class Tonya Gonzales
123rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — In a room filled with many senior and junior non-commissioned officers, seven Joint Multinational Training Command NCOs became lifetime members of the U.S.

Army Europe's prestigious Sergeant Morales Club at the 7th Army NCO Academy chapel, recently.

The Sergeant Morales Club holds a tradition of honoring the highest ideals of integrity, professionalism and leadership for the enlisted force in Europe.

"I challenge you to carry on the tradition ... as you get in-

ducted in the Sergeant Morales Club," said Joint Multinational Readiness Center's Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Graham.

Sgt. Morales, a squad leader of Puerto Rican descent, strove for and achieved the highest caliber of leadership while assigned to an engineer battalion in Germany. He showed genuine concern for the needs,

See MORALES, page 16

Sleeve me alone



Photo by Spc. Lauren DeVita

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — A Romanian soldier fends off Jaeger, a military police dog with the 615th Military Police Company, as a part of a working dog demonstration. NATO and coalition soldiers received training on counter-IED tactics, to include examples on the uses of military police canine units for searches, from U.S. military personnel.



Deployed sisters Maj. Veronika Reynolds and Spc. Raven Fitzgerald have fun catching up after four years during a six-hour reunion on Forward Operating Base Lagman, April 18.

Sisters reunite downrange

Story and photo by
Maj. Robert Hoover
2SCR Public Affairs

ZABUL, Afghanistan — With increased focus on supporting military families by the first lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, our families can even be found among our service members here in Afghanistan.

Two sisters recently had a six-hour reunion at Forward Operating Base Lagman, April 18, after not seeing each other in over four years. Maj. Veronika Reynolds and Spc. Raven Fitzgerald from Portland, Ore., were grateful for the time they got to spend together.

Reynolds serves as the aviation officer for Combined Team Zabul in the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment. She plans and coordinates all air movement in the province. Reynolds deployed from Vilseck, Germany, and was a prior enlisted Soldier in the aviation field.

She fell in love with helicopters during a routine maintenance flight and went on to become a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot. This is her second deployment but the first to Afghanistan. She has served in the military for 19

years.

"I really enjoy the military and being a Blackhawk pilot. I am living the dream and having this opportunity to see my sister so many miles from home makes this reunion even more special," said Reynolds.

Fitzgerald serves with 3rd Brigade, 101st Aviation Regiment, as a flight operations specialist and deployed out of Fort Campbell, Ky. Fitzgerald verifies each pilot has an evasion action plan in case of emergencies and tracks all flight hours.

Fitzgerald is based out of Tarin Kot at Camp Cole with Combined Team Urugan and joined the Army a little over four years ago.

"This is my first deployment. I joined the Army because of my sister and you can say that she inspired me to go into the Aviation field," said Fitzgerald. "I am really lucky to be at Tarin Kot, because it is spacious and surrounded by mountains. Lagman is pretty crowded and small. It makes me appreciate Tarin Kot more."

The daughters of Phillip and Linda Huddleston, who still live in Portland, are part of a large family of 12 with five sisters and five brothers. Their father, Phillip Hud-

dleston, is a retired chief warrant officer 3 meteorologist and is no stranger to the military. But despite the turmoil of military life, their parents have been married for 48 years.

The sisters caught up on family and common interests such as their children. Both have sons. Reynolds has a son, Bobby, who is 19 months old and Fitzgerald has a son, Anthony, who is 3 years old. The reunion was short but a welcome reprieve from the daily operations of deployed life.

The sacrifices made by many service members don't just include women sacrificing their time taking care of children, but also women deployed away from their children. Military families don't fit into a standard mold and sometimes mothers deploy leaving their husbands to take care of the children.

If both spouses are in the military, both can be deployed at the same time causing parents to create a plan to leave their loved ones with their grandparents or other family members.

It is just part of the sacrifices that all military families have to make to be our heroes on the homefront.

Carnival atmosphere of U.S. Army’s Soldier Show provides getaway

Coming to USAG Grafenwoehr’s Main Post Theater, May 16 at 7 p.m.

Story and photo by
Tim Hips
FMWRC Public Affairs

FORT BELVOIR, Va. — The carnival concept of the 2011 U.S. Army Soldier Show will take audiences on a globe-spanning journey to more fun-filled venues in 90 minutes than some folks experience in a lifetime.

From a boardwalk to a fun house to a circus to a county fair to a time machine, Soldier-entertainers will take their guests on a song-and-dance tour of carnivals.

“It’s an opportunity to actually take the audience on a journey with us,” Soldier Show director Victor Hurtado said. “And not just to the continental United States – we have a great international scene.”

Africa, Samoa, Latin America, Nepal, with influences from India, Thailand and China are represented in the song-and-dance extravaganza that plays to the strengths of



Pvt. Sandra Ayinbode of Schweinfurt, Germany, sings Christina Perri’s “Jar of Hearts” and Sean Paul’s “Give it up to me” during live auditions for the 2011 U.S. Army Soldier Show at Wallace Theater on Fort Belvoir, Va. Grafenwoehr’s show is May 16.

cast members from several countries. Each international scene will feature authentic music from that locale.

This Soldier Show cast features strong instrumentalists on the violin, drums, guitar, keyboards and bass who will keep the performers on the move as they dance from scene to scene. One central character will help keep the show moving by introducing each scene.

“There are a lot of dancers, a lot of movement in the show,” Hurtado said. “But

there some great voices as well. And some great stage presence. We have some great rapper and spoken-word guys, so we have quite a bit of that driving the show.”

Patriotism is woven throughout the show that does not resemble a military production.

“With MWR, we’re in the business of taking families and Soldiers away from the trials and tribulations of what they’re going through, so I think this will definitely

inspire the patriotism, but really help you escape and take you to places you wouldn’t go all in one day,” Hurtado said. “You wouldn’t go to the circus, a boardwalk, a country fair, a fun house – in four different areas of the world – and a Fourth of July celebration, all in one day.

“You could never physically do that, but you’re going to be able to do that at this show.”

“Entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier” is the working motto of Army Entertainment Division, which will launch the 106-performance Soldier Show tour from Fort Belvoir, Va., to 61 installations, garrisons and other venues around the United States, Germany and Korea.

“As a group, they’ve really become very cohesive,” Hurtado said. “We’ve really been able to get the show together quickly. They’ve been very engaged. It’s pretty amazing where they are already, as far as rehearsals go.”

The 2011 U.S. Army Soldier Show’s eight-month tour will conclude Dec. 10 at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. Admission to all shows is free on a first-come, first-seated basis.



Photo by John Reese

Hands are made for hugging, not hitting

By **Daniela Moten**
USAG Garmisch

GARMISCH-PARTEN-KIRCHEN — The Garmisch Elementary-Middle School and Army Community Service theme on April 29 for awareness of Child Abuse Prevention Month was the very special and fun event, the Megahug!

The entire student body and many of the teachers headed out onto the dew sprinkled front lawn shortly after classes began. The group of approximately 100 children and 20 adults, many dressed for the royal wedding taking place the same day, filled the air of the beautiful Friday morning with

laughter and chatter.

With hands on hearts, teacher Bill Morgan led the student body in the Pledge of Allegiance before warming everyone up with a few passes of a stadium-style wave.

“We wanted to do something fun and positive for the children to increase awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month,” said ACS director Doris Tyler.

The Army Community Service staff, who originated the idea for the Megahug, joined forces with the Strong Beginnings Group from the Child Development Center to form the giant group hug to emphasize that hands are for hugging and holding, not hitting!

What’s Happening

Garmisch Briefs

Amazing Bike Race

May 14: How well do you really know Garmisch-Partenkirchen? How is your stamina?

Get together with 3 to 5 of your closest friends, they could even be family members and join us in a bike race around town based on the popular television show.

All ages welcome. Race starts at 2 p.m. Cost: \$15 per person for a 3-5 member team.

Neuschwanstein

May 15: Visit the most popular tourist attraction in Germany, Neuschwanstein Castle. Stops also planned in the castle town of Fuessen, the Wieskirche, and Ettal Monastery. Meet at 8 a.m. Cost: \$39.

Prague

May 20-22: Enjoy a guided daytime tour May 21 and a fair amount of free time, plus a special guided tour of the Franz Kafka museum. Departs at 4:15 p.m. Cost: \$370.

Lunedì al Mercato

May 23: A gastronomic shopping experience in Munich. Join us in search of Italian wines, pasta, meats and coffees. Bring Euros or EC card. No credit cards or VAT forms. Meet at 9 a.m. Cost: \$20.

Munich/Third Reich

June 1-2: Meet June 1 at 7 p.m. in the PLTCE Auditorium, Bldg. 253 for an overview of the tour. June 2 the group will meet at the Bahnhof just prior to the 8 a.m. train to Munich.

In Munich, we will recreate the Bier Hall Putsch as it happened in 1923, visit the site of the Munich Accords and explore other places associated with the Nazi movement.

This is an extremely interesting tour, somewhat like examining an urban battlefield. Lots of walking all day - wear comfortable shoes. Cost: \$35.

Vino Nella Valle

June 1: Come to a wine tasting seminar and sample Italian wines, cheeses and salamis. Let us do the driving! We will drop you off at home with your purchases. VAT forms accepted. Meet at 5:30 p.m. Cost: \$10.

Unless noted, all FMWR events meet at the Pete Burke Center. To register for the events contact the staff at the Pete Burke Community Center, DSN 440-2638, Civ. 08821-750-2638, or email us at garmisch.FMWRodr@us.army.mil

The Pete Burke Community Center also provides space available transportation to and from the opera house for those who just want the evening in Munich. Cost: \$12.

Graf/Rose Barracks Briefs

Strong BANDS

The program is set up to help you achieve a Balanced lifestyle, be Actively motivated, practice Nutritional health, be Determined to excel and focus on Strength and conditioning. Attend the featured events to get your Strong BANDS wristband. Wear your band throughout May to support the strength of the Army Family.

May 14: U.S. Forces Europe Mountain Bike Race Series. Grafenwoehr Training Area Hill 459, Steinfelser Strasse, 92655 Huetten.

There are categories for men, women and youth. Pre-registration and on-site registration are available.

Free T-shirts for racers and awards for 1st and 2nd place finishers. For more, contact Outdoor Recreation at DSN 475-7402 or DSN 476-2563.

May 20-22: “May Madness” Unit Level Softball Tournament, at the main post softball triplex behind Bldg. 170. There is a 16 team limit, register your team now.

Awards will be given for 1st and 2nd place individuals and 1st, 2nd and 3rd place team trophies. For more, and to register, call the

main post PFC at DSN 475-9024.

For more STRONG BANDS information, call the USAG Grafenwoehr Sports & Fitness Operation Branch at DSN 475-8207 or send email to: usag_graf_sports@eur.army.mil, or login to www.facebook.com/TheAllArmySports for prize giveaways every day in May.

2011 Soldier Show

May 16: Enjoy the festive atmosphere of a live, 90-minute musical performance created by Soldiers, for Soldiers at the Main Post Theater.

Show starts at 7 p.m. and doors open at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free.

Army Ball

June 11: To celebrate the 236th Army Birthday, to reinforce the long-standing traditions of our profession, to honor those who have served before us, to be mindful of those currently deployed, and to anticipate with great confidence the future strength of our national institution, U.S. Army Europe will present

The Army Birthday Ball at 6 p.m. in the Village Pavilion, Patrick Henry Village, Heidelberg.

The dress for military is dress blue with bow tie. Civilian dress is formal black-tie.

Prices, per person, include dinner and entertainment: Pvt.-Sgt. 1st Class and GS-7 equivalent and below, \$20; Master Sgt.-Col. and GS-9 equivalent and above, \$33; general officers and senior executive service civilians, \$40.

There are a limited number of tickets available on a first-come, first-served basis. Guests must be 16 years of age to attend.

To make reservations, call the USAREUR Protocol Office at DSN 377-4507 or 377-4521 or CIV 06221-394507 or 06221-394521.

Community newsletter

Want up-to-date information delivered to your inbox? Subscribe to the community newsletter today! E-mail the USAG Grafenwoehr Public Affairs Office at usagnews@eur.army.mil to be added to the list.

Hohenfels Briefs

Comedy show

May 14: Get ready to laugh it up because the “No Laugh Track Required IV” comedy show is coming to Hohenfels with a line-up that includes the always hilarious Heather Marie Zagone, Rosie Tran, Justin Wade, Todd Rexx and Johnny Cardinale. Mark your calendar for this free performance open to U.S. ID cardholders 18 years and older on May 14. Doors will open at The Zone, Bldg. 150 at 8 p.m. Show starts at 9 p.m. Come early to get a seat! For more information, call DSN 466-3676 or Facebook us at www.Facebook.com/Hohenfels-FamilyandMWR.

Kontakt Club trip

May 15: Day trip to the Abensberg Brewery, with a visit to the Hundertwasser Tower. The cost for the tours and the beer tasting will be 10 euro per person. Lunch is not included. Bus transportation will be provided and will meet at 9 a.m. at the Hohenfels Schiessstaettkapelle.

For directions, please take a look at the club’s website. Expected return to Hohenfels will be around 6 p.m. To reserve your spot call, Petra Neumeier at DSN 466-2702 or e-mail kitty66@gmx.de.

Military spouse lunch

May 16: All military spouses are invited to participate in this interactive forum focusing on the top five needs of men and women. The lunch will take place at 11:30 a.m. at the Hilltop Chapel Center behind the elementary school. For more, or to RSVP, e-mail Sgt. Rosa Mendoza at rosa.mendoza2@us.army.mil or call DSN 466-3473/4795.

Mammograms

May 19 and 20: If you are 40 and older or if you have a history of breast cancer in your family, you may need a mammogram.

The health clinic will have a mobile mammogram van on site to perform mammograms. For more, and to sign up for your exam, call Emily Rich at CIV 09472-83-3347.

Hospital tours

Expecting parents can tour host nation hospitals, meet the doctors and nurses and ask questions. If you’re expecting to deliver before October, call Emily Rich at CIV 09472-83-3347 to sign up for tours.

May 18: St. Hedwig’s hospital at 6 p.m. May 27: St. Joseph’s hospital at 5 p.m.

Massage therapists

The Post Gym is looking for certified massage therapists. ID cardholders and local nationals may apply. For more, e-mail jessica.brink@eur.army.mil or call DSN 466-2883/3633.

Coaches needed

Youth Sports is looking for volunteers to coach the following fall sports: Soccer, ages 3-15; Tackle football, ages 12-15; Flag football, ages 6-12; Cheerleading, ages 6-15; Bowling, ages 6-15. To find out how to become a coach, call Parent Central Services located in Bldg. 10 at DSN 466-2080/2078 or CIV 09472-83-2080/2078.

Rafting and canyoning

June 11: Head down to Lengries, Germany for a weekend on the water. This time it is for one overnight and two days of adventure on the river and canyons. Also enjoy an extreme water park that is way too much fun to miss.

This trip includes rafting and canyoning, but other activities like skydiving, paragliding, downhill mountain biking and much more are available at additional charges.

Depart Outdoor Recreation, Bldg. H15 at 4:30 a.m. on June 11. Call ODR at DSN 466-2060 to register for the course.

Registration deadline is May 27. Price is \$219 and includes transportation and rafting and canyoning equipment. Bring an extra change of clothes, swimsuits and money for extra expenses.

Teen Basketball

Every Saturday: The basketball courts in the School Age Center’s gym will be available on Saturdays, 7th through 12th-grade students. CYSS registration required to participate. For more, call the Youth Center at DSN 466-4492 or CIV 09472-83-4492.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Community Town Hall

May 17: This is your chance to have your voice heard! Come to the community town hall at 10 a.m. in the School Age Center on Askren. It is open to the community and is designed to foster communication between residents and garrison leadership.

2011 Soldier Show

May 18: The U.S. Army Soldier Show, proudly presented by Family & MWR, visits the Schweinfurt community at Finney Fitness Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. Seating is first-come, first-served. The performance begins at 7 p.m. The event is open to the entire community and admission is free.

D-Day run

May 21: Commemorate this historic part of U.S. Military History with a remembrance run at Kessler Gym. Distances are from 2-10 km. Sign up at any fitness center or call DSN 353-8234, CIV 09721-96-8234.

Garrison Ball

May 21: Walk the red carpet! Practice your awards acceptance speech! This gala event is the high point of the USAG Schweinfurt Social Calendar and features dinner, dancing and revelry.

Every member of the community is cordially invited. Event starts at 6 p.m. and tickets are 30 euro for Pvt.-Staff Sgt., 2nd Lt.-1st Lt., NAF1-NAF4, C4-C7, GS1-GS11 or 40 euro for all other pay grades. Tickets are available from 1st Sgt. Gary Emmert, Ledward Bldg. 206, room 010 or from Staff Sgt. Anthony Mauro in the Ledward Chapel. For more, call DSN 354-6514 or CIV 09721-96-6514.

Car Free Sunday

May 22: Join Schweinfurt Outdoor Rec. on this all-day bicycle exploration. Trip leaves at 11 a.m. The local region is having a bikes-only day through local roads and paths, with vendors and merchants lining the route. Sign up at ODR or call DSN 353-8080, CIV 09721-96-8080.



Peaceful pedaling in Bavaria

Bike paths offer avenues of adventure

Story and photos by
Charles Stadtlander
USAG Schweinfurt
Public Affairs

The valleys rise up around you, green and fertile. A castle looms, perched on a hill like a bird of prey that eyes you as you wind your way along the curve of the river.

With no cars around, all you hear is the hum of your narrow tires and the steady rhythm of your breathing. Ahead, the river folds back on itself and you pump your brakes to prepare for the sharp turn.

While many looking for a getaway this summer may be asking travel agencies for package deals to crowded beach resorts or booking discount airline tickets to out-of-the-way airports, they are overlooking a hidden gem of a vacation right here in Germany: a self-guided bicycle tour.

Throw a couple bags on the back of your bike, hop into the saddle and pedal away to explore your new homeland for a few days. It's a cheap, easy and beautiful journey that is a destination in itself. Bavaria is crisscrossed with long-distance bike paths

that offer safe, car-free lanes that are easy to follow. A long weekend or a multiweek trip waits, and your only limiting factor will be how far away from home you're willing to spin your wheels.

Gearing up

The first step is choosing your steed. Touring bicycles are available for purchase at your local PXtra or nearly any German bike shop. Multiday bike rental shops operate in many larger cities.

Make sure you get a bike capable of carrying a rear rack and that you'll be comfortable sitting on for several hours. Wider tires with a bit of tread are useful, as you'll encounter an occasional gravel path, but steer clear of big, knobby mountain bike tires that will cost you excess energy.

Trip essentials

As for luggage, two rear bike bags, or panniers, should do the trick. Pack rain gear, but go easy on the number of outfits as every extra item you carry could possibly be unnecessary weight.

Keep one outfit to ride in and another to change into at the end of the day. A good rule of thumb is to pack what you think you need and then get rid of half of it. Chances are you won't use it anyway.

A helmet, tire repair kit and pump, toiletries (don't

forget sunblock), a camera and a paperback book to while away the evening may be all you need for your whole trip.

Evening plans

The bike paths are dotted with youth hostels, or "Jugendherberge," that offer an affordable night's sleep with breakfast for members of all ages.

Membership is €12.50-20 per year, rooms often under €20 per night, per person. For those looking to splurge on hotel rooms, cozy guesthouses — called "Zimmer Frei or Pensionen" — offer rooms with breakfast for about €30 per person, per night. The truly rustic and frugal-minded can pack a tent and pay a nominal fee to pitch it in campgrounds along the way.

As long as you stay out of large cities, the accommodations will remain affordable, welcoming and full of local charm and color. You don't even need reservations, just head to the tourist information office in any town center, even smaller villages.

Attendants there speak English and either for a small fee (€1-€2) or for free they'll book a room for you and give you directions on how to reach it.

Regardless of where you lay your head, you'll sleep well. A long day of pedaling and a plateful of Bavarian fare

will set you up for a truly restful night.

Plotting a course

Simple maps, available at most German bookshops, will take you everywhere you need to go. A bike path is called a "radweg" in German, and though you'll carry a map with you, the paths are well-marked.

You may be able to simply look for the signs with bike logos and arrows and leave your map in your bag. There are 117 official marked bike paths that total over 5,400 miles of riding in Bavaria, but three primary routes offer views of the varied, beautiful aspects of this German state.

Franconian treasure

The Main River bike path runs nearly 300 miles through the low, Franconian foothills, passing directly through U.S. Army locations in Schweinfurt and Bamberg and coming very close to the garrisons in Ansbach, Grafenwoehr, Vilseck and Hohenfels.

A short hop on the train will deliver you to the river, where you can start your journey. For lucky cyclists in Bamberg and Schweinfurt, the headache of vacation traveling can be reduced to a 10-minute bike ride to the riverbank.

Turn left toward Frankfurt or turn right towards Bayreuth. Within minutes,

you'll be outside of the urban center, winding with the notably curvy river through terraced vineyards, stone-sided canyons and past historic palaces and castles.

You can stop for lunch in picturesque cities and spend the night. Since the path follows the river, the terrain is flat and even with lots of stops for beer and bratwurst, a full day of riding can easily carry you 40 or more miles.

The blue Danube

For those looking to check out the main artery of Europe, the Danube River radweg is the super-highway of German bike paths. Take your bike on a train to Ulm or Ingolstadt, head to the river and join the caravan cycling eastward.

You can't miss the throngs of people enjoying this wildly popular bike path. Race the dozens of barges steaming down the river, see the medieval cities of Regensburg and Passau and witness the mightiest of European rivers.

The Danube starts in Germany and continues all the way to the Black Sea in Bulgaria.

Though the trip would take a significant time commitment and a bit more of an explorer's attitude, the dedicated cyclist can stay along the river as it continues through the great capital cities of the continent: Vienna, Bratislava,

Budapest, Belgrade and Bucharest.

Alpine adventure

Finally, for the fitness-crazy bikers willing to tackle some of the Alpine highroads, the bike path from the Koenigssee, a lake in southeast Bavaria, runs all the way along the Alps to the Bodensee, a massive lake at Germany's border with Switzerland.

The bike path runs past the famous castle Neuschwanstein and right through the village of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. You'll hear the lowing of grazing cows and the clank of their bells.

Snow-capped peaks will taunt you on the horizon. Sweat it out on the hills and reward yourself with a night in a half-timbered Alpine guesthouse.

These three bike paths of Bavaria are just a hint of what Germany and Europe have to offer for the intrepid cycle tourist. A visit to a German bookstore will show you the rest of the vast network of paths waiting to be explored.

Editor's Note: All German trains except high-speed ICE accept roll-on bicycles. Be sure to purchase a bicycle ticket and look for the bike symbol on the side of the train car before boarding. As always, when traveling across international borders, carry a passport.



Typical Bavarian villages like this one crop up by the dozens along every bike path.



Somewhere in the hills of southern Bavaria, a cyclist succumbs to the weight of baggage and steepness of the road. When the going gets tough, you can take a breather at one of the many roadside snack stations.



Travelers can customize their trip. You can camp like this cyclist; this bike is loaded with front and rear bags for weeks of travel, including a full array of camping gear. Additionally, riders can stay in youth hostels and affordable guesthouses, leave their cumbersome supplies at home and roll with rear bags only.

Nutrition, exercise key for moms-to-be

By Jennifer Walsh Cary
BMEDDAC Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany — It's probably safe to say that in most women's minds, being pregnant is the equivalent of getting a free pass on exercise and food for at least nine months. However, Bavaria Medical Department Activity health care providers say that's the wrong mindset to have while you're pregnant.

"You may feel like pregnancy is a great time to relax," said Lindsay Truax, a nurse at the Illesheim Health Clinic. "However, it is very important during pregnancy to get the recommended amount of exercise, which is 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week."

This breaks down into roughly 30 minutes a day for five days a week. It may not be enticing, but by working out, Truax said you can avoid pregnancy complications such as constipation, varicose veins, swelling in your legs and it even helps with delivery.

"It will not decrease the pain associated with labor and delivery, however, exercise builds your stamina and strengthens muscles making it easier for you to endure labor and delivery," she said.

For those who aren't regular exercisers, she recommends starting off slowly with 10 minutes of walking each day and building up to a 30-minute walk.

"While exercising you want to make sure you are drinking plenty of water, avoid wearing tight clothing, make sure your shoes are sturdy and avoid exercises that put you at a risk for falling or another injury," she said.

She also recommends that women perform kegel exercises often.

"These exercises strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, which support your bladder, urethra, uterus and rectum," Truax said.

In addition to staying active, women need to come to terms with how much weight they should actually gain during pregnancy. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the average healthy woman should gain about 25-35 pounds during pregnancy.

"It is true that you need to gain weight. It is

not healthy for you or your child if you do not gain enough weight during pregnancy," she said. "However, everything you eat your child eats. If you eat a lot of sugar, fat and cholesterol, your child will be eating all these things, too."

As a general rule, women should not increase their caloric intake until they reach the second trimester, which is 12 weeks into the pregnancy. Until then, they should take a prenatal vitamin each day and stick to foods that are rich in vitamins and minerals. Once a woman reaches the second trimester, she should add an additional 300 calories to her daily food intake for the rest of her pregnancy.

The rules also change if a woman decides to breastfeed.

"Once a woman starts breastfeeding, it's recommended she increase her calories by 200 more a day for a total of 500 extra calories per day when compared to her pre-pregnancy caloric intake," Truax said.

Many women want to lose their post-baby weight as quickly as possible, but it's important to take things slowly to maintain your health, according to Truax.

"Just keep in mind that it took you nine months to gain the weight and it will take nine to 12 months to lose the weight. So start gradually," she said. "It is always good to check with your health care provider during your postpartum exam prior to starting an exercise routine post-delivery."

Walking continues to be a good option along with gentle stretching and strengthening exercises. For women who are used to hitting the gym hard, she said to resist the urge.

"It is also recommended you do not start any rigorous exercises such as running or jogging until you are at least six weeks postpartum," Truax said. "You will also want to check with your health care provider prior to starting any abdominal exercises."

Overall, Truax said she wants women to know that when they're pregnant, it's important to stay healthy for both the mother and child.

For more information about pregnancy and nutrition or exercise, contact your local Army health clinic.



Pregnancy nutrition tips

While trying to get pregnant:

Start taking prenatal vitamins and make sure it contains 400 mcg of folic acid.

Stop smoking and using tobacco products.

Cut down on alcohol and caffeine consumption since it is not safe to consume alcohol or high amounts of caffeine when pregnant.

Work on getting the recommended 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week, along with muscle-strengthening exercises two days each week.

During the 1st trimester:

Continue to take a prenatal vitamin every day. You do not need additional calories at this point.

Continue to do 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week.

During the 2nd and 3rd trimester:

Increase your calorie intake by 300 calories each day. These should not be "empty" calories, but foods that are high in vitamins and minerals.

Continue to do 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week.

After you have the baby:

If you're breastfeeding, increase your daily calories by another 200 calories for a total of 500 additional calories each day compared to your pre-pregnancy caloric intake.

Continue to do 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week.



By Lt. Col. Stephen Linck
BMEDDAC

Want your health-related question answered? E-mail brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil or post your question on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/bmeddac. Your question may appear in the next edition of the *Bavarian News*.

Q: I started running about three months ago and recently noticed some pain in my foot. The pain usually occurs after I stop running, and is on the top part of my right foot. I don't think this is normal.

Before starting to run, I researched the proper running shoes for my feet and my stride, and normally try to run on softer surfaces such as gravel/dirt/asphalt. The pain will usually last while I am walking during my cool down, and sometimes will reappear at other random times when I am walking. What might cause pain on the top part of my foot?

Thank you,
Runner in St. Leon-Rot

A: Dear Runner,

To get a good idea of the possible problems I need a better idea of the type of pain. In medical speak, we would ask you to describe the pain in terms like "stabbing pain" or "throbbing pain." We call descriptions like these qualities, and the quality of the pain can tell us a lot about the potential causes.

You sound like you did all your homework on shoe types before you started running. Were you sedentary before you started and is it possible you started out too fast?

Without knowing your entire story, the problem can be anything from lacing your shoes too tight to a stress fracture of one of the bones in your foot. I recommend you see your local health care provider and describe the problem for a better idea of what is going on.

Q: I wear soft contact lenses about 9 or 10 hours a day. When I take them out at night, my eyes start hurting - it almost feels like I have something stuck to my eyelid that irritates my eyeballs each time I blink or do anything. The funny thing is, it occurs in both eyes, at the same time, after I remove the lenses, so I know it can't be that something is stuck to the lenses. I clean and disinfect the lenses every night and never sleep in them. Do I have some sort of eye disease?

Respectfully,
Itchy eyes in Illesheim

A: Dear Itchy,

I have never heard of a problem like this before. I applaud you on your dedication to contact lens hygiene so I doubt you have some kind of eye disease. From the brief description of the symptoms, it sounds like allergies. There is a lot of pollen in the air these days. My car was yellow from pollen when I came out of the office yesterday.

If this problem started recently or is intermittent, I don't think there is anything serious going on. Have you tried plain saline drops to help? I don't recommend medicated over-the-counter drops without first consulting an optometrist. If saline drops don't help, make an appointment and explain the problem.

Q: How do I get my husband to stop drinking junk like Monster and Red Bull? I know it's not good for him and honestly, I think it's become a crutch.

Thanks,
Energy-efficient in Eschenbach

A: Dear Energy-efficient,

I have a hard time with this question since those that know me frequently see me with Red Bull at work. The key to anything is moderation. How many energy drinks does he consume each day and are they sugar-free? I really see energy drinks as the modern day "Jolt Cola," which claimed to have twice the caffeine and all the sugar of regular colas.

Most people will say that soda is bad for you but still drink it to excess. I think the real problem with energy drinks is all the sugar they contain. Try relating too many energy drinks to too many sodas and maybe it will help, but remember, you can't make someone quit something unless they want to.

If you need a shot of advice, e-mail your question to Lt. Col. Stephen Linck at brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil.



Courtesy photo

Pharmacies accept unused medications

By Jennifer Walsh Cary
BMEDDAC Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany — Bavaria Medical Department Activity pharmacists are encouraging beneficiaries to turn in their expired, unused and unneeded medications to their local Army health clinic pharmacy.

"We currently take back all medications," said Lt. Col. Ron Foley, BMEDDAC pharmacy director.

Beneficiaries should bring their medications to the pharmacy in their original prescription bottles or packages if possible. If needles and syringes need to be disposed of, beneficiaries can pick up a sharps container at their local Army health clinic.

"To avoid overfilling, seal the container when it's three-fourths full," Foley said. "And check with your clinic to identify the drop-off point for filled sharps containers; typically this is not at the pharmacy."

In most situations, beneficiaries do not need an appointment to turn in their medications. However, there are exceptions.

"If you have multiple controlled substances to dispose of, an appointment may be required to avoid inconveniencing other patients because of the time required to process the turn-in," Foley said. "Unlike over-the-counter medications, controlled substances must be individually inventoried and documented."

Examples of controlled substances include: Tylenol 3 or other medications containing See MEDICATION, page 16

More than a mouthful Dental infections can be serious

By Lt. Col. Jose Villanueva
BDENTAC

VILSECK, Germany — Anyone can have a dental infection; some infections are mild, some moderate and others severe. What causes dental infections? For an infection to take place there are three factors to consider: the host (that's you), the environment (how clean you are keeping your mouth), and the bacteria or "bugs" in the mouth.

In a healthy person, there is a balance. Infection occurs when there is an imbalance — meaning that perhaps you don't feel well, perhaps you have not had access to proper dental hygiene or the opportunity to practice good brushing and flossing, or that you may have picked up a bug such as during the winter when the flu always seems to be a threat.

The most important of the three is you, the host. The environment and the type of bug causing the infection are important but not nearly as important as you. Soldiers in the field are often subjected to fatigue from training, lack of sleep, prolonged exposure to a dirty and dusty field environment, and poor oral hygiene practices. These situations set the stage for a dental infection to occur.

Dental infection can occur when dental decay or cavities extend to the nerve of a tooth or when the gums become diseased. Another common dental infection is infection of the gum around a wisdom tooth when it begins breaking through the surface of the gum. Many times dentists recommend removing wisdom teeth before they can cause this type of trouble.

The signs and symptoms of infections are pain, swelling, heat, redness and loss of function. You may have toothaches, pain on chewing, limited opening, sensitivity to hot and cold, swelling, fever, and chills.

Typical complaints are: "I have a toothache," "I can't open my mouth," "My jaw is swollen," and "I have a sore gum." When you have these types of complaints you should immediately go to your local dental clinic to be examined and treated. If you notice these con-

ditions early and promptly see your dentist you can usually be treated in the dental clinic. If the dental infection is ignored, it can spread to the head and neck causing swelling of the neck and possibly breathing and swallowing difficulties. A dental infection that is ignored can become a life threatening infection requiring hospitalization and surgery. In rare situations, dental infections can result in death.

Soldiers, parents, day care providers, teachers, supervisors and commanders must be aware and ensure that anyone experiencing dental pain, swelling, fever and chills, and the inability to open their mouth fully, be seen by a dentist.

When you visit your dentist with a possible dental infection, the dentist will examine your mouth, head, and neck. Vital signs such as temperature, blood pressure, pulse rate and respiratory rate are taken. A temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher may indicate a severe infection.

Dental infections can be treated in various ways. If the nerve inside the tooth is no longer healthy and the infection is just inside the tooth, a root canal can be done. A root canal treatment cleans out the infection from inside the tooth. Antibiotics may be given. Another option is to remove the tooth if it cannot be salvaged with a root canal.

If the infection has spread outside of the area of the jaw causing swelling in the neck and throat, then you may be admitted to a hospital, where you will be taken to the operating room for removal of the infectious material that has accumulated in the various spaces of the head and neck area. The hospital stay can be a few days or weeks depending on how you respond to treatment. Severe infections are serious business and can affect you for the rest of your life.

BDENTAC dentists are here to provide the best available care for you. If you suspect a dental infection, contact us immediately. Stay alert and stay alive.

Editor's Note: Lt. Col. Jose Villanueva works at the Grafenwoehr Dental Clinic.

“A dental infection that is ignored can become life threatening ... requiring hospitalization.”

3 badges in 3 days



Left: Spc. Sienna Madurski, an MP with the 615th Military Police Company, 709th MP Battalion, qualifies with an M9 pistol at the Lampertheim Training Area in Mannheim, April 15. Right: Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Price, plans NCO for the 18th Military Police Brigade, leads the pack at the start of the 12-kilometer ruck march on Coleman Barracks in Mannheim, April 17.

18th MPs push their limits

Story and photos by
Sgt. Adrienne Burns
*18th Military Police Brigade
Public Affairs*

MANNHEIM, German — Military police are known as the Army's "triple strand of strength." They are a force to be reckoned with concerning matters in law enforcement, corrections and criminal investigations. A select group of Soldiers from the 18th Military Police Brigade looked to prove themselves by completing a different trifecta, April 15-17, here in Mannheim.

Through coordination with the American Forces Network headquarters, Soldiers from around Germany had the opportunity to earn three coveted awards in three days: the German Armed Forces Efficiency Badge, the German Sports Badge and the Austrian Sports Badge.

The event would consist of three grueling days of hard work that would test each competitor both physically and mentally. Under the watchful eye of German Master Sgt. Alex Ketterl, the instructor certified to award the badges, every Soldier would find themselves pushed to the limit.

Marksmanship was the first event, and qualifying on an M9 pistol gave many of the MPs a boost of confidence at the beginning of the competition. MPs regularly qualify on the M9 pistol since historically it is their assigned weapon.

But, what followed the marksmanship event was a wake-up call for almost everyone.

When Soldiers showed up at the local swimming pool for their second event, they were still riding that

wave of confidence from the range, but the first 50 meters of the swimming competition changed that.

Soldiers needed to complete a 200-meter timed swim for the German Sports Badge and a 300-meter timed swim for the Austrian Sports Badge. They also had the option to complete a 1000-meter timed swim as an alternate event for the upcoming long-distance run.

For some Soldiers, just completing the 200-meter swim was all they could muster. Others stuck it out for the 300-meter race, and only a few dared to make the 1000-meter journey.

"The swim was definitely the hardest because we don't train for it," explained Spc. Ryan Bowden, an MP with the 529th Military Police Company.

The swimming event was where many Soldiers realized that simply being in shape might not be enough to get through the competition. It was also going to take a lot of heart.

"My leadership picked me and I was really motivated to do this," said Spc. Sienna Madurski, an MP with 615th MP Company, "I really wanted to be here."

Madurski's statement was one that was repeated time and time again by other competitors as well. The desire to see the event through to the end and take advantage of a unique opportunity was a personal motivator for the majority.

A full day on the track on Sullivan Barracks for the second day of events had Soldiers competing in four areas: high jump, shot put, the 100-meter dash and a long-distance run.

For those unaccustomed to com-

peting in field events, the high jump and shot put proved the most challenging to master. But, Soldiers were given the opportunity to continue trying, and those with heart persevered.

The last day of the competition consisted of a 12-kilometer timed ruck march around Coleman Barracks with a 36-pound rucksack.

Despite the physical difficulty of completing seven events in three days and the mental challenge of mastering new sports events, there was no shortage of laughter and smiles during the three-day event.

"It's a relaxed environment; everybody's having a good time. You get to go out there, have some fun and get some PT in while you're at it," observed Cpl. Casey Butcher, a team leader with the 529th MP Company.

Soldiers were not the only ones enjoying themselves. When asked what continues to motivate him to come out during his free time to oversee these events, Ketterl said, simply, "I love to work with these people, our allies, and that's really the reason. It's fun."

Whether Soldiers had earned gold, silver or bronze badges, or needed to come back in the fall to try again, everyone expressed gratefulness for the opportunity.

For those selected to compete in the future, Madurski said, "Look up the events and just start training. Start training for the events. Some of the events are pretty hard if you don't know what you're doing."

Madurski added, "There's no way to fail unless you give up on yourself. They only allow you to succeed."



A Soldier works as a gunner in a video-simulated convoy at Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr, recently.

Virtual training prepares Soldiers for real-world threats downrange

Story and photo by
Spc. Lauren DeVita
7th U.S. Army JMTC Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The air was thick with the stench of bomb chemicals when Soldiers walked into the room. Their breathing became labored, their eyes began to water and someone sneezed as he realized he was standing in a bomb-making lab.

Fortunately for them, this was just a simulation.

Soldiers from Baumholder, Germany, were attending the Multicultural Mobile Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Interactive Trainer at the Joint Multinational Training Command here, April 12.

The simulation cell exercise was designed to familiarize Soldiers with what bomb-making materials smell like so they are more easily recognizable when military members conduct searches in homes while downrange.

The McMCIT, which has been funded by the Joint IED Defeat Organization, is a state-of-the-art mobile training system and the only kind in the world made available to all U.S., NATO and coalition Soldiers. Consisting of four cells, the McMCIT helps Soldiers gain enemy perspective and shows them what to watch out for during convoy operations — all without setting foot in a classroom.

"It's a memory game," said Allen D. Drew, the site lead of the McMCIT. "These four cells are designed to give Soldiers visual cues so they can see right away when something is not right — whether it's while they are conducting patrols or searches."

The first cell shows examples of the five components of IEDs with the theme "IEDs are nothing new." Displayed on the walls, in glass cases, are bomb vests that are broken down to see each part of how a suicide bomber's vest functions.

The vest models were designed by retired Command Sgt. Maj. Hideshi Sasaki after he deployed with his unit and lost 18 of his Soldiers from suicide bombers.

"He decided enough was enough and after studying the makings of the suicide bomber vest, developed the model for other Soldiers to study and understand, so they do not have the same fate as his Soldiers," Drew said.

The main importance of this cell is to understand the many components of IEDs and the different categories.

Drew also stresses that anything can be made into an IED and that is why Soldiers must conduct situational awareness, "Take 9/11 for example — was that not an IED?"

Proceeding into the second cell, Soldiers gain an understanding of the odors associated with bomb-making chemicals, as well as seeing the many items which are used to make a homemade bomb.

Designed to mimic the home of an al-Qaida member, the moment the door is shut, the lights dim and Soldiers are greeted with a video image of a man in Middle Eastern garb.

He is speaking Arabic, but Soldiers can follow along with the

English subtitles provided.

The Soldiers watch with solemn faces, some with looks of hatred, as the man on the screen describes how to kill the maximum amount of Soldiers with the minimum amount of force through the use of IEDs.

Once the video segment ends, the lights come back on and Soldiers walk through the cell and observe the materials used to make bombs, including examples of sacks of chemicals with Arabic on the front describing the contents.

To test what they have learned, Soldiers must take an electronic quiz which, records their answers and gives them a score at the end.

"It's a lot of information, but the visual pieces help — especially for Soldiers who have never been deployed," said Sgt. Ian Nickerson, an infantryman from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 470th Armor Battalion, from Baumholder, Germany. "Classroom lecture is not enough. Soldiers can only sit through so much of that and hardly retain anything at all."

In the third and fourth cells, Soldiers go back to their own realm, with a trailer set up to look like a command post and gain insight into the pieces needed to complete a successful convoy mission.

"This is not a reflex trainer, this is a motorized trainer," Drew said. "This is just to see how well the Soldier can pay attention and analyze a situation."

Scrambling over who gets to play which position first, the Soldiers excitedly grab the controllers as though they are getting ready to play on their Xboxes back in the barracks.

"These might look like PlayStation controllers," Staff Sgt. Amador Sanchez, a counter-IED instructor for Theater Specific Individual Readiness Training said loudly over the commotion in the room, "but the system is designed to potentially save you or your battle buddy's life."

While the McMCIT is located in Grafenwoehr, it is capable of mobilizing and being moved to other countries to train U.S., NATO and coalition Soldiers, and currently, the course is offered in English, Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian.

Just like all JMTC courses, the curriculum for this course is frequently updated to meet multicultural and battlefield nuances to ensure students get the best instruction possible.

Training nearly 100 Soldiers per day, the McMCIT provides them with leadership development and, ultimately, prepares them for deployments to Afghanistan.

"I'm new to the Army and have never been deployed," said Pfc. Allen Ellis, an infantryman from 218th Infantry Battalion in Baumholder, Germany. "To be able to get this kind of training where I learn to think like an insurgent, will really help me when I do go downrange."

For commanders who are interested in finding out what kinds of scores their Soldiers can get on this simulator, check for enrollment through ATRRS on AKO or contact Drew at DSN 475-5075, CIV 09641-83-5075.



Photos by Jonathon M. Gray

Say hello to my friend mat

MANNHEIM, Germany — Sgt. Kevin Lopez (bottom, at right, and on top, above), 72nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, and Pfc. LC Johnson III, 181st Signal Company, 43rd Signal Battalion battle it out during the combatives tournament held at the Sports Arena on Sullivan Barracks, here. The combatives tournament was day three of weeklong activities during Cyber Regimental week, April 18-22. The focus of the week was to provide a proper tribute to the Signal Corps and individuals to develop camaraderie and unit cohesion.



Army's oldest NCO Academy adjusts training to stimulate leadership

Story and photo by
**Sgt. 1st Class
Tonya Gonzales**
*123rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment*

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — “Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! — Incoming!” shout several Soldiers as they dive into the prone position to take cover.

Chaos surrounds the Combat Outpost as green and white smoke fill the air and Soldiers scramble to take over as squad leader, while others initiate first aid to their injured comrades.

It is day 14 for a platoon of Warrior Leader Course students from Bravo Company, class 07-11, at the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, here.

The platoon (of students) are the first to test and train on the new Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes and a COP attack, said Staff Sgt. Michael L. Anderson, Bravo Co., 7th Army NCOA WLC Instructor.

The four STX lanes were redesigned to simulate current contingency operations like Afghanistan to allow the Soldiers to plan, rehearse and react in certain situations, he said.

In order to provide training relevant to the contemporary operating environment, the Joint Multinational Training Command, to include the 7th Army NCOA, effectively employs doctrinal changes and current lessons learned to develop a program of instruction with enduring training values which give Soldiers the ability to train on a variety of situations and scenarios.

“I am definitely taking this training back to my Soldiers,” said Sgt. Jody S. Casey, 42nd Clearance Company, upon completing STX lane 1, where his squad encountered a simulated attack at a zero marks-



Soldiers attending the Warrior Leader Course, class 07-11 from Bravo Company, 7th Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, conduct first-aid procedures on their injured comrades during an attack of their combat outpost by mock-insurgents while conducting a situational training exercise, April 11.

manship range while training with the local Afghan National Police role players.

The 7th Army NCOA is the first and oldest NCOA in the U.S. Army. As a part of the JMTC, it is the only place in the U.S. Army that regularly trains with multinational partners to assist in transforming their NCO Corps and forces.

“I gained some new methods of training,” Polish Land Forces Staff Sgt. Maciej Rzepka said after expressing his satisfaction with the course. “I like it very much and I can see how the U.S. Army trains.”

Upon completing the COP attack scenario with B Co.,

Rzepka said, “It was interesting. I conducted some missions and it was a good experience. It has improved my military skills.”

The WLC is taught in three major areas of instruction: leadership module, warfighter module, and the training module.

It is the initial leadership course for U.S. Army enlisted Soldiers where they challenged the various garrison and tactical leadership lessons, while preparing them to make the transition to becoming NCOs.

“We’re leaders as well. We have to be those managers and

supervisors, and implementing all those garrison task that’s involved in that,” Anderson said.

Students learn everything about being an NCO — from waking up to implementing the new PRT (physical readiness training), executing training schedules, how to organize, conducting inspections and marching squads, Anderson said.

Anderson continued to explain how Soldiers are ambassadors when making their presence in a combat situation. He said they must develop the skill set to talk to people while remaining tactically vigilant and able to react to any unknown situation.

“It really challenges their thinking,” he said. “And how to be flexible and adapt as leaders.”

He explained that, “Something as simple as taking care of your Soldiers training today, might not be simple training. It might turn into a critical event that takes place any day.”

After completing the 18-day WLC, exactly 254 U.S. Army Europe specialists, corporals and sergeants and 16 multinational Soldiers representing partner countries Bulgaria, Moldova, Poland and Turkey, successfully graduated here April 15.

“I feel very excited,” Wojcik said, who graduated as a distinguished international awardee from Alpha Co. “I am happy, but I’m sad it’s over. It was a good three weeks and good to train with the American Soldiers.”

Fellow Polish NCO and distinguished international awardee from B Co., Rzepka, is grateful of his WLC instructors and training.

They are “highly experienced and good instructors,” Rzepka said. “I will remember the course for a long time.”



Seven Joint Multinational Training Command non-commissioned officers became lifetime members of U.S. Army Europe's prestigious Sergeant Morales Club at the 7th Army NCO Academy chapel, April 13.

Area Soldiers receive Morales honors

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training, development and welfare of his squad and their families.

“To train others to be what Sgt. Morales was, and what you are today,” Graham said. “That is what every NCO strives to be and strives to do.”

In recognition of exemplifying this special kind of leadership, the following seven NCOs were inducted into the SMC and received an Army Commendation Medal for their meritorious achievement:

Staff Sgt. Alicia Anderson (Freeman) instructor, Charlie Company, 7th Army NCOA;

Staff Sgt. Michael L. Anderson, instructor, Bravo Co., 7th Army NCOA;

Staff Sgt. Nicolas J. Gauthier, assigned to 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, Joint Multinational Readiness Center at Hohenfels, Germany;

Staff Sgt. Jimmy L. Martin, instructor, C Co., 7th Army NCOA;

Staff Sgt. Caleb J. McFall, instructor, C Co., 7th Army NCOA;

Staff Sgt. Jesus Serrano, instructor, B Co., 7th Army NCOA;

Staff Sgt. Derrick Smullen, instructor, B Co., 7th Army NCOA.

“These NCOs consistently lead by example and demonstrate the highest qualities of leadership,” said Sgt. 1st Class Luis Perez, vice president of

SMC and assigned to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

“I feel honored to be part of the club. It embodies values like taking care of soldiers, leadership and being the best NCO that we can possibly be,” said Alicia Anderson of her accomplishment.

First Sergeant Dana J. Greenley C Co., first sergeant, describes Alicia Anderson as someone who has set herself apart from her peers and “embodies every fiber of a Be, Know, Do NCO.”

Greenley explains that Alicia spends extra time in the classroom with her students to ensure they understand the course materials, studying for a board, doing extra PT while the students were at chow, or having a meticulous grasp of the materials she instructs.

Like many SMC inductees before, these seven NCOs had to compete in various selection boards at the company, battalion and brigade level or higher.

Like Alicia Anderson, each inductee values their profession and their unit, while exercising leadership principles, and displaying exemplary Army ethics.

They strive to strengthen and develop the seven Army values in Soldiers, while displaying the warrior ethos as well as exemplary physical fitness and marksmanship skills.

Maintenance team keeps training on track

Grafenwoehr-based unit wins top DA award for expertise and professionalism

By Maj. Jennifer Johnson
JMTC Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — In an environment of dwindling resources, the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command Organizational Maintenance Activity (OMA) works to assist training units as they prepare to deploy.

By demonstrating a willingness to help others and a strong work ethic, the Department of the Army (DA) selected the OMA as the 1st place winner of the DA Award for Maintenance Excellence for fiscal year 2010.

Established in 1982, the award recognizes exceptional accomplishment in maintenance. The OMA won in the medium category for Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) units for displaying expertise and professionalism in the performance of their tasks, maintaining Soldier competency, and displaying effective leadership.

For the chief of OMA, the win is a matter of pride.

“It makes me feel great. I told the chief of staff I was going to keep competing until I won DA,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jose M. Agosto, chief of the OMA.

Combining maneuver and

live-fire training areas with simulations and communications, JMTC provides realistic multi-national and U.S. Army training missions, while supporting theater security cooperation initiatives. When units convoy to and from the area, they call the OMA.

“We provide area recovery all the way to Nuremberg for Europe,” said Agosto. “When they (units) are convoying this way or leaving out of here, they call us and say I’m going to be on the road, and can you provide back-up support or recovery support.”

Formerly a garrison asset, OMA realigned under the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, JMTC. The unit takes on a bigger support role in helping the JMTC train units for combat.

Whatever the requirement, the JMTC can project an expeditionary training package to support Soldiers training anywhere in the world.

It is the OMA that ensures JMTC organizations have the tactical equipment they need to train.

“Our main mission is JMTC tactical equipment — to maintain it,” said Agosto. “When TSAE (Theater Support Activity Europe) sends teams out to Romania or any-

where else, their equipment is here. We maintain it. So then we help to get the equipment ready and get it out of here.”

According to Agosto, the OMA is part of the big training machine, without which, JMTC could not operate.

“We do a number of different things to support the government, from fuel to recovery to radios,” said Spc. Michael J. Chickonoski, a construction equipment mechanic working at OMA.

Agosto is a true believer in the better management of resources and he says he treats federal money likes it’s his money.

Before “efficiency” was the current catchphrase, in 2009, he was instrumental in reducing the cost of purchasing Class IX by streamlining the ordering process through OMA.

As a secondary mission, OMA provides maintenance support to other tactical units who reside in the Grafenwoehr Military Community that do not have organizational maintenance assets.

“Everything else that is tactical — weapons, radios, night vision devices and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) equipment — that belongs over here, to any of the sections or units, from JMTC, in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, we either maintain it or ensure it is properly

maintained,” said Agosto.

If a unit needs help, Agosto says his organization is there — a fact well-known by the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, one of four combat brigades in U.S. Army Europe, preparing to deploy to Afghanistan this year.

“We help because, bottom line, they are deploying and they need to be ready,” said Agosto.

As the 172nd SIB was preparing its equipment for deployment, the unit realized there was an issue with its brake test machines.

“They couldn’t brake test anything bigger than a HMMWV, so they started calling us to, pretty much, brake test all their equipment, especially the equipment they’re taking with them,” said Agosto.

Support requests are not relegated to U.S. Army units, or to the normal work day. Chickonoski remembers getting a call while shopping, off-duty.

“I just got a call we have a rolled over Air Force HMMWV,” said Chickonoski. “I was actually in the middle of the commissary shopping. I put the stuff back and I came down here to OMA and got the truck and went out there.”

If a unit needs to fuel up a tank, pull a vehicle out of the mud, or a forklift, they call the OMA.

Medications require proper disposal

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codeine, morphine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, amphetamines or benzodiazepines like alprazolam or lorazepam. Customers receiving controlled substances from an Army pharmacy are asked to sign for them.

All medications taken back from patients must be destroyed and may not be used in patient care.

For those who prefer to flush their medications or take them out with the trash, he recommends thinking twice about it.

“Throwing medications in the trash or flushing them down the toilet provides an opportunity for misuse or accidental access by children and animals,” Foley said. “It is also not a good idea because it could be bad for the environment or violate local laws.”

Instead, bring them to the Army health clinic pharmacy for disposal. As for the medications that are still being used, he recommends practicing safety measures at home.

“Medications should be

stored safely out of reach of children and pets,” Foley said. “Also, heat and moisture are not good for medications so it’s best not to store them in a bathroom or windowsill.”

He said many people also have a tendency to hoard medications, which is another safety issue.

“Unfortunately, some young adults are looking to abuse medications and if you have a large stash of them in your cabinet, it gives them access to medications they wouldn’t have otherwise,” Foley said. “Also, once medications expire they lose their effectiveness so it’s really pointless to hoard old medications.”

Overall, he said there’s one thing he hopes people will learn to do.

“Please break that hoarding habit and make our community and your home safer by purging all expired and no-longer-needed medications from your home by properly disposing of them.”

For more, call or visit your local Army health clinic.

SOY/NCOY brings out the best

Continued from page 1
represented U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza and was one of three females competing this year. “But overall (the female competitors) have proven we can do the same tasks as the males, just as well.”

Spc. Ryan Jones, who represented U.S. Army Garrison Baden-Wuerttemberg, agreed. “The competition is tough for everyone,” said Jones. “It’s hard work and long days, but everyone remains competitive.”

Day two began at 4:30 a.m. in the chilly Bavarian air with a 12-mile foot march. Competitors lugged 35-pound rucksacks on their backs, along with approximately 20 pounds of additional gear, including water, a rifle and Interceptor Body Armor as they plodded through the Grafenwoehr Training Area.

Sgt. Jacob Brewster, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, crossed the finish line first in two hours and 27 minutes.

“This is just one event, but I feel good about where I am in the competition,” said Brewster. “Seeing the whole competition and knowing what the other competitors can do keeps you on your toes. I’ll just continue to do the best I can in every event.”

Later that day, competitors plunged into the land navigation course. Armed with a compass and map, they raced through course and honed their warrior tasks and drills skills including administering



Sgt. Jacob Brewster, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, salutes IMCOM-Europe Command Sgt. Maj. Barry Maieritsch as he stands before the selection board on final day of the competition, May 4.

first aid, radio communications, interacting with the media, and nuclear, biological and chemical equipment exercises.

The final day proved the toughest for each Soldier and NCO. Making sure their dress

blues were impeccable, each stood before the selection board, which consisted of eight senior enlisted leaders. Competitors were then asked a wide array of questions ranging from uniform regulations and Army policies to current events.

Each participant trained and prepared tirelessly for the competition with help from their sponsor and chain of command at their installation prior to the event.

“I’m a little nervous about going in front of the board,” said Pfc. Shaquanna Taylor, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart. “But I prepared for this, I feel confident that I’m a strong competitor.”

“Training is key in a competition this competitive,” said Spc. Jonathan Melendez, USAG Schinnen. “You have to be mentally strong and prepare your body physically for the tasks at hand.”

As the competition ended, there was no shortage of confidence as each participant imagined taking home the title.

“Being in this competition already distinguishes me amongst my peers,” said Melendez. “I’ve pushed myself throughout and often found myself on top. I have a good chance.”

“Everyone wants to be that top Soldier,” added Taylor. “But I’ve given 100 percent and I could win this.”

Sgt. Judy Oman, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, agreed.

“It’s a close competition,” said Oman. “But I feel confident in what I’ve done.”

The IMCOM-E 2011 Soldier of the Year and 2011 NCO of the Year will be announced May 12 in Heidelberg, Germany.

Women to gather intel from Afghans

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here. She will command the collection of several four-woman teams, circulating among them as they are dispersed throughout the brigade’s region of responsibility during the deployment.

“Their primary purpose is intelligence gathering from Afghan women,” said Montgomery. “The women might tell the FET members ‘our water is bad here, we have no sewage disposal, help us.’ Or, they might say ‘that guy over there, he’s corrupt.’”

Female engagement teams, which the Marine Corps first experimented with in 2009, use assembled groups of four Soldiers, strictly women, to interact with Afghan civilians in ways that all-male units would not be able to. Religious tenets and cultural norms in Afghanistan can at times leave women there feeling apprehensive about speaking with any unknown males, especially armed Soldiers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Burton of the 172nd Support Battalion is sending several Soldiers to join the FETs.

“I’m leaning forward based on my own experience,” he said. “I’m teaching them what they need to know.”

Each of the four-woman teams will be assigned to an infantry task force as feminine liaisons to the Afghans. According to Montgomery, the war’s communication effort so far has been hindered and forced to ignore half of the Afghan population, namely its women. The hope is that the presence of FETs will more effectively integrate coalition forces and accelerate stability in Afghanistan.

But the women’s new role in the war will not be without their own personal obstacles. The Army units they will attach to will be made up almost completely of men, and the women may accordingly encounter macho attitudes, say both Montgomery and Burton.

“I’m getting them ready mentality-wise,” Burton said. “It’s going to be totally different for them in an all-male combat environment.”

Montgomery agrees that the experience will be new for both herself and her Soldiers, but doesn’t see the deployment of FETs as part of a greater political debate.

“You’re always working uphill as a female in the Army, this is no different,” she said. “We’ll just go over there and do great work, proving that we’re a viable combat option.”

Preparation for the deployment will require a significant amount of additional training. The Soldiers come from a variety of occupational specialties, including medics, cooks and mechanics. Their grasp of infantry skills like advanced marksmanship, combatives and patrol basics may not have been a primary focus prior to joining a female engagement team. But later this year in Afghanistan, they’ll need to excel in these Soldier skills.

Montgomery, an enthusiast of the vigorous CrossFit brand exercise, is also taking personal responsibility for the Soldiers’ physical fitness.

“Where we’re going is at over 7,000 feet of elevation. A lot of the patrols will be ‘off the horse,’ and we’ll be on foot with the infantry guys day after day,” she said. “You can’t let yourself be a burden in an environment like that.”

At a recent morning workout session, the Soldiers ran circuits of useful real-world exercises of Montgomery’s design. They heaved medicine balls against the wall, leapt repeatedly onto thigh-high boxes, swung heavy kettlebell weights and dropped to the floor repeatedly in burpee pushup movements.

The women worked in pairs, and called out remaining reps and shouts of encouragement to one another.

“Four more,” said Pfc. Tori Howard to her partner, Pvt. Latoya Jackson, drawing tired breaths midway through their third circuit of box jumps.

“This work will pay off later when they’re walking those mountains,” said Montgomery. “When you go through the struggle and the suck together, you become a team.”

Symposium recognizes stellar performers

By Karl Weisel
USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs

WIESBADEN, Germany — “We don’t want you to do more with less; we want you to do less better.”

That was among a series of messages shared by Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, commander of the U.S. Army’s Installation Management Command, and his staff during the 2011 Installation Management Symposium in San Antonio, April 18-21.

Acknowledging that in an era of “fundamentally different economic realities” cutting across the entire spectrum of U.S. government operations, a renewed focus on how dollars are spent to provide Soldiers and their families with vital services and support is crucial.

“Isn’t it interesting that in these fundamentally different fiscal times that we find ourselves with less money, less fuel, less of everything,” said IMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola. But, “we are not in an austere environment,” explained Lynch, “we are in an environment of having less than we had before.”

That means finding better ways to use natural resources and “human capital,” reduce energy costs and in some cases eliminate and replace programs and services that are no longer effective, he said. While engineers and planners continue to seek ways to reach a net zero operating environment, everyone must look for ways to improve efficiencies in all aspects of Army installation operations. “We have made significant progress in this line of effort, but we still have a considerably long way to go,” Lynch said.

While pointing to the ways U.S. installations around the world are incorporating new “greener” methods and technology in construction projects, the commander said it is also important that managers look at future and existing facilities for ways to enhance energy and water efficiency, sustainability and stretch funding.

“Our mission is to provide Soldiers, civilians and their families with a quality of life commensurate with the quality of their service,” added IMCOM’s senior leader. This means ensuring that as Soldiers, civilians and their families move from one installation to another they are guaranteed of finding a similar quality of life - improving service predictability and delivery.

Grafenwoehr takes top honors at IMCOM Symposium

- Stalwart Award Winner – Wanda Stover, DHR, ASAP
- Stalwart Award Winner – Kathy Aydt, inbound DGC
- IMCOM Soldier of the Year – Spc. Luis G. Berber, USAG Graf DES
- Garrison chosen to be Net Zero Waste Pilot Installation
- SECARMY Environmental Award for OCONUS installations
- DPW Supervisory Management Award – Manfred Rieck
- ACS – Best Individual Contribution – Doris Tyler, USAG Garmisch
- BOSS – Best Event 1st Place – Single Soldiers’ Summit
- BOSS – Best Installation BOSS Program 2nd Place
- IMCOM Mentee / Mentor program Team #1 selected out of six teams to brief AUSA Symposium on Civilian Readiness (USAG Graf Commander-Mentor/USAG Baden Wuerttemberg Mentee/Initiative may go Armywide.)

It is also important that IMCOM leaders and installation managers “engage senior commanders and talk to them about fiscal responsibility,” Lynch said.

Hundreds of managers and directors from around the installation management community converged on San Antonio for the weeklong conference to hear senior leaders describe challenges facing the military, to take part in professional development sessions and to get a look at some of the latest services, support and technology available in the industry.

“We owe it to you to develop you,” said Lynch, describing efforts to enhance professionalism across IMCOM. “We have to do better at talent management. ... We can’t do what we do without talented professionals like you.”

Lynch asked participants to “take that knowledge back and share that knowledge. ... They want to know what you’ve learned.”

“You have done great things and will continue to do great things,” said Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment.

Recognizing achievers

Hammack was on hand to help recognize outstanding achievements by individuals and teams throughout the installation management community during the conference. “We designed this week to also recognize the people,” said Lynch.

Spc. Luis G. Berber, a military policeman with U.S. Army Garrison Grafen-

woehr, was presented a plaque inscribed with the “Soldier’s Request” to recognize his efforts in being selected as the IMCOM Soldier of the year in July 2010.

“The caliber of my leadership has been far above what I expected,” said Berber. “From being entrusted with representing my chain of command in the Soldier of the year (competition) to providing the tools, resources and support to maintain a family within the military community.”

Besides honoring the Army’s Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year (both military policemen serving in U.S. Army Europe), Army leaders recognized the Army Communities of Excellence, IMCOM Stalwart nominees and outstanding public affairs practitioners.

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr was well represented. In addition to being chosen to be as one of six Net Zero Waste pilot installations, USAG Grafenwoehr was lauded for its Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program, Mentor program, and individuals from Army Community Service, Directorate of Human Resources and Directorate of Public Works received accolades.

As Lynch summed up the weeklong symposium during the final session, thanking those in attendance for their dedication and support, he told his listeners, “We in the Installation Management community will continue to do what we can to improve Soldier and family quality of life.”

Editor’s Note: Luke Elliot, Headquarters, Installation Management Command Public Affairs, contributed reporting.



Bamberg Middle High School student Benjamin Burbak straps on an Empathy Belly as part of a lesson designed to show teens the physical difficulties of being pregnant. Other students chose to tote around dolls as a reminder of the amount of attentive work necessary in raising a baby.

Teens learn parenting

Continued from page 3
better experience of having a kid, instead of carrying around a baby doll,” said senior Megan Lambes who is among the students practicing as a parent for the week.

For those who chose to be expecting, the Empathy Belly Pregnancy Simulators were strapped on each morning after being filled with warm water.

Two seven-pound balls were then placed in the pouch with the water-filled bag so that the balls could shift and give the feeling of a moving fetus and add even more

weight to the pregnancy suit.

“It was really heavy,” said senior Wyatt Hamilton who was one of many pregnant males wearing the simulator.

The overall response to the project has been positive.

“I certainly wish to do something like this again in the future in my classes,” Engel said.

Editor’s Note: Charlotte Woods is a senior and student journalist at Bamberg Middle High School. Half of the 350 students at the school commute each day from the Schweinfurt military community.